
HOUSE BILL 2242

State of Washington

64th Legislature

2015 Regular Session

By Representatives Hudgins, Magendanz, and Stanford

Read first time 04/23/15. Referred to Committee on General Government & Information Technology.

1 AN ACT Relating to training state information technology
2 employees in common business-oriented language for the purpose of
3 cost savings in maintaining, repairing, and updating state legacy
4 systems and applications; adding a new section to chapter 41.06 RCW;
5 creating a new section; and providing an expiration date.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature recognizes that many of
8 the state agency computer systems and application platforms are
9 considered legacy systems because they use antiquated technology,
10 such as common business-oriented language programming, known as
11 COBOL. However, because of the high expense of a new system or the
12 difficulty to change or redesign to a more modern system, many of
13 these legacy systems continue to be used. The legislature finds that
14 experienced COBOL programmers have either retired or are nearing
15 retirement, making it difficult and expensive to find qualified
16 individuals to repair, update, and maintain state agency legacy
17 systems. Therefore, the legislature intends to encourage state
18 employees in the information technology field to receive training in
19 COBOL to help secure and preserve state agency legacy systems while
20 reducing costs.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 41.06
2 RCW to read as follows:

3 (1) The department of enterprise services, in collaboration with
4 the office of the chief information officer and The Evergreen State
5 College, shall establish a pilot project to train state agency
6 information technology employees, on a voluntary basis, in common
7 business-oriented language programming, also known as COBOL, with the
8 goal of reducing costs for maintenance and repair of legacy systems.
9 The pilot project shall create a training program to be offered to
10 state information technology employees through the Washington state
11 human resources learning management system. The pilot project shall
12 begin in August 2015 and end in August 2019. A report is due to the
13 legislature annually by December 1st of each year regarding the
14 following:

15 (a) The number of state employees that participated in the
16 training;

17 (b) The number of training opportunities provided each year;

18 (c) The cost of training for each participant;

19 (d) How the training is being advertised and offered to state
20 employees;

21 (e) Characteristics of the state employee participants, such as
22 job title, years of state service, and the agency;

23 (f) The number of times a state employee trained in COBOL is able
24 to effectively use the training to update, repair, or maintain a
25 state legacy system;

26 (g) Any estimated cost savings; and

27 (h) Any other information the department of enterprise services
28 deems appropriate.

29 (2) This section expires December 1, 2019.

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